

**Chairman Edwards Applauds White House Budget for Vets & Military Families**

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Representative Chet Edwards applauded the Administration's fiscal year 2010 budget plan for veterans and military construction released today.

The Administration is requesting \$53 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs budget – an 11% increase over the previous year, or \$5.4 billion. The Administration budget for veterans is consistent with the funding level authorized under the FY10 Budget Resolution approved by Congress last week.

"With this budget, President Obama is keeping his promise to those who have kept their promise to defend our nation by requesting the largest VA budget increase ever requested by any President," said Edwards, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. "This budget will mean the doors of our VA hospitals will be re-opened to hundreds of thousands of middle-income veterans who honorably served their country, but were denied VA care. For the 5.8 million veterans already using VA health care, it will mean more doctors, shorter waiting times and better care."

The Administration request includes \$22.9 billion for military construction - a decrease of \$2.1 billion from the previous year that is mostly attributable to declining costs for the Base Realignment and Closure process known as BRAC, which comes to an end in 2011. Significant investments are made for military hospitals and housing. "When it comes to military construction, this budget demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of our military families with significant investments in new hospitals and improved housing," said Edwards. "Our troops and their families have earned the right to world-class medical care and facilities. Modernizing the Department of Defense system to improve quality of life for our troops and their families must continue to be one of our highest priorities."

Edwards is the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and is a member of the House Budget Committee.

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